

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1920.—Copyright, 1920, by The Sun-Herald Corporation.

PLAYS COMING TO BROADWAY FROM VARIOUS SOURCES



Miss
ELSIE
FERGUSON
in
"SACRED AND
PROFANE LOVE"
MOROSCO
THEATRE



Miss
RENEE DELTING
in
"THE MAGIC MELODY"
SHUBERT THEATRE



Miss LILY
CAHILL in
"THE PURPLE MASK"
BOOTH THEATRE



Miss
MARGARET WYCHERLY
in
"JANE CLEGG"
GARRICK
THEATRE



Miss FLO DAVIS,
with "THE SIGHT SEERS"
COLUMBIA



LIONEL
BARRYMORE
in
"THE LETTER OF THE LAW"
CRITERION THEATRE

NEW PLAYS.

MONDAY—MOROSCO THEATRE—"Sacred and Profane Love," play by Arnold Bennett, in which Miss Elsie Ferguson will return to the stage as a star of the Charles Frohman company. The drama, which is said to be somewhat unconventional, has been produced in London. The cast includes Jose Ruben, Alexander Onslow, Sebastian Smith, Misses Olive Oliver, Maud Milton, Peggy Harvey, Katherine Brook and others.

CRITERION THEATRE (Afternoon)—"The Letter of the Law," a translation of Eugene Brieux's "La Robe Rouge," in which Lionel Barrymore is to be presented by John D. Williams. It is regarded as one of the strongest works of the French playwright. Among the company are Miss Doris Rankin, Russ Whirl, Frank Kingdom, Misses Maud Hosford, Ada Roswell and Josephine Wehn, Clarence Derwent, Charles H. Greene and Charles Coghlan.

GARRICK THEATRE—"Jane Clegg," by St. John G. Ervine, who wrote "John Ferguson." The Theatre Guild's special cast for this play includes Miss Margaret Wycherly, Dudley Diggs, Miss Helen Westley, Henry Travers, Erekina Sandford, Jean Bailey and Tommy Gillen.

PRINCE'S THEATRE—"Tick-Tack-Too," a musical revue, with twenty scenes and twenty-five songs; written and produced by Herman Timberg, who also composed the music and who will appear in the entertainment. The company includes Misses Flo Davis and Hattie Darling, Jay Gould and forty others.

Cinema No Real Rival to the High Class Drama

By LAWRENCE REAMER.

DURING the present week two dignified dramatic enterprises will be under the aegis of the cinema. Two plays, the work of well known men writing for the stage-to-day, will be put forward by one of the "movie" companies. One of these dramas, it may be observed, is the work of Eugene Brieux. The other is from the pen of Arnold Bennett. Neither France nor England can do much better for the theatre of the day than put these two writers at its service.

What may be the motives of the company in making possible the production of these works it is not necessary to define. The rights of these plays for the cinema will undoubtedly be more valuable if they are associated with the names of popular players and a certain degree of prosperity in New York and other large cities.

During the present dramatic season many dramatic enterprises have thus been fattered by the cinema companies, which have in some cases taken directly into their hands the task of producing the plays instead of merely making it possible for a manager to do this. In the majority of cases the picture companies have done no more than provide the sinews of war. Of picture companies have been willing to stand in this relation toward the cinema. But it might be mentioned that those who have done so are of the kind that control the best powers in the theatre.

Just how the production of dramas in their original form is going to make their value greater for subsequent use on the screen of the moving picture drama is not for us to attempt to decide. That is a matter of business which the cinema companies are supposed to understand better than those less affected by such action. Whether managers acting in this capacity toward such a different medium as the picture theatre are going to find it possible to resist the tendency to think and act in its terms is another question which their conduct alone can answer. Yet the production of plays by Brieux and Bennett does not indicate any departure from prevailing standards. Whether the manager produces only the best of what the cinema companies may bring him or whether he tries to sanctify on the stage an extravagance that may be effective as an appeal to the eye is a matter of his own conscience. It is safe to say however that as soon as there are grounds for believing that a manager is endeavoring to gain for worthless material the prestige of a first class theatre and first class actors he will find no support in critical quarters from which much aid and comfort are expected. Plays put forward by the cinema companies are going to be worth that effort only so long as they meet a certain standard in the not too exacting theatre of the day.

The Lion and the Lamb.

Such united effort on the part of the theatre and the cinema does not look like mortal competition between the two enterprises. Rarely do the artistic lion and the lamb lie down together in such agreement. In theatre rivalries the lion is likely to be inside of the lion when the lying down begins. So the

of actors were the unique means of providing diversion. The gathering in the smallest community sees the picture just as New York, as Boston and as Chicago saw it. Whether the protagonist be Miss Mary Pickford or Miss Norma Talmadge, Charles Chaplin or Douglas Fairbanks, there is exactly the distribution of actors for every town whatever its size may be. The inadequate substitutes usually found in the one night company is not to be seen in the picture play. Not only are its miming actors but its pictorial phases identical whatever may be the size of the town in which it is shown.

Villain of Melodrama Is Gone.

Not only have the smaller towns turned from the inferior companies of actors purporting to represent the popular plays, but the class of drama which was at one time confined to the more or less sensational theatres has all but disappeared from the spoken stage. Melodramas that drew their effectiveness from means more or less violently physical have been compelled to face before the greater skill of the camera in devising the hair raising and the nerve racking devices as an accompaniment to the development of their drama. Indeed, the merely pictorial seems to have lost some of its hold on the public. Spectacles with color and music still claim some of the surffrages they were once able to command so easily. But even in this field, the camera can accomplish wonders unattainable to the stage mechanicians and artists.

But What of the Loss?

Surely there is nothing to deplore in the supremacy of the cinema in the fields noticed here. It is no blow to the art of the theatre that some of its flying messengers the least accomplished and the least completely equipped should have been routed by the picture plays. The art of the drama in its best estate will not suffer from the assignment of the crude melodramas to the screen rather than the theatre. Neither of these branches of its activity contributed in the slightest degree to the artistic importance of the actor's skill nor did they reflect any of the actor's allied arts.

Power Theatres, But Better.

If half the theatres in a city, for instance, were to be leased for picture plays there is no reason why the efforts of managers previously expended on such a large field might not be concentrated on a smaller enterprise of the highest quality. With only the ten theatres to look after instead of twenty, actors and plays ought to be twice as fine in quality as they ever have been. With the cinema providing the causal entertainment the drama need not be afraid

Miss VANDA HOFF, in "ZIEGFELD MIDNIGHT FROLIC"
NEW AMSTERDAM THEATRE



Miss Flo LEWIS in "Tick Tack Too," Princess Theatre.

of being too serious. She need not refer apologetically to art as if it were only there because a certain amount of it were indispensable and not because as much as possible of its influence ought to be the goal. The sand bags of the theatre will not lack employment. The manifold energies of the cinema may continue to occupy them.

But the brighter spirits—the men who are at last free to write for a public which can find its lighter minutes provided for in the picture play, the actors who are able to extend the range of their art without fear of wandering into fields too remote for the public bent on fun or sensation, the painters who can decorate the stage as they would apply their skill to any other field in which the painter is accepted as his true value; these are the workers in the art of the drama who are destined to be freed when the cinema, following out its manifest destiny, attracts to-day that section of theatregoers who are opposed to anything but the least serious and the least elevating forms of the drama's art.

The theatre will have nothing to complain of at the hands of the cinema if it should thus relieve it of the load which it is just now compelled to carry. Its burdens will be so much lighter when half the playhouses are darkened to show the pictures at their best that the least hopeful admirer of the art will take courage. At last the theatre will have to devote its energies to only the highest and most inspiring of its problems. With such a blessed purpose in view the drama has no reason to feel any animosity against the cinema. It should receive it with open arms.

Plays That Continue.

"Lightnin'".....Gaiety
"East Is West".....Astor
"Happy Days".....Hippodrome
"Scandal".....39th Street
"Adam and Eve".....Longacre
"The Jest".....Plymouth
"Clarence".....Hudson
"The Gold Diggers".....Lyceum
"The Storm".....48th Street
"Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic".....N. A. Roof
"Declasse".....Empire
"Apple Blossoms".....Globe
"The Little Whopper".....Casino
"His Honor Abe Potash".....Bijou
"Passing Show of 1919".....Winter Garden
"Buddies".....Selwyn
"The Magic Melody".....Shubert
"Wedding Bells".....Harris
"Irene".....Vanderbilt
"The Son-Daughter".....Belasco
"Aphrodite".....Century
"One Night in Rome".....Globe
"My Lady Friends".....Comedy
"Monsieur Beaucaire".....Critic
New Amsterdam
"The Sign on the Door".....Cort
"The Famous Mrs. Fair".....Miller
"Gest's Midnight Whirl".....Critic
Century Roof
"Smiles Through".....Broadhurst
"The Acquittal".....Cohan & Harris
"The Purple Mask".....Booth
"Frolics of 1920".....44th Street
"The Passion Flower".....Belmont
"Always You".....Lyric
"Mamma's Affairs".....Pulton
"As You Were".....Central
"The Night Boat".....Liberty
"My Golden Bird".....Nora Bayes
"Breakfast in Bed".....Eltinge
"Beyond the Horizon" (spec. mat.).....Critic
"He and She".....Little
"The Cat-Bird".....Maxine Elliott's
"Shavings".....Knickerbocker
"The Wonderful Thing".....Playhouse
"The Tragedy of Nan" (spec. mat.).....39th Street

ON THE CITY CIRCUIT.

Miss Ruth Chatterton in "Moonlight and Honey".....Cohan & Harris
Boarborough, will be the attraction this week at the Standard Theatre, with the cast and production which was seen for several months recently at Henry Miller's Theatre.

"Too Many Husbands." W. Somerset Maugham's best comedy, will be seen this week at the Shubert-Riviera with the same brilliant cast as at the Booth Theatre, including Kenneth Douglas, Miss Estelle Winwood, Lawrence Grossmith, Fritz Williams and others.

"No More Blondes." With Ernest Truex in the chief role, will come next week to the Bronx Opera House. In this new farce are the Misses Nancy Fair, Ellen Wilson and an excellent cast.

Colonial Ballet at Hippodrome.
In observance of Washington's Birthday some special features will be introduced this week in the performance of "Happy Days" at the Hippodrome, including a Colonial ballet led by the Four Amaranths.

George Cohan, Opera Fan, Kept Secret Ten Years

WHO ever would suspect George M. Cohan of being a grand opera fan? He is one, has been for more than ten years and has tried to hide it all that time, wishing to uphold the supposition that he was interested in nothing but Broadway and the theatre. He has regarded his fondness for the highbrow musical entertainments held in the Metropolitan as part of his private life, in fact as a secret.

Having kept the secret for ten years, it was revealed recently because of his deviation from a policy of low operatic visibility. In all that time Mr. Cohan either sat in the balcony or gallery, at rare intervals joining the crowd of standees on the main floor. Growing bold and believing that his operatic tendencies simply never would be discovered, he donned his evening clothes, bought himself a \$7 seat in the orchestra and heard a performance of "La Forza del Destino." He thought himself disguised and hidden.

The grand secret discovered, genuine and long continued difficulty was experienced in getting Mr. Cohan to confess and offer any explanation he might have. For he always has stood as a leading apostle of Broadway only. He has stood for Broadway, its ways, its clothes and its talk against the world. And to think that all these years he has been surreptitiously deserting to grand opera two or three nights each month during the season. Although the Metropolitan Opera House is right in Broadway, just one step inside and you are about 5,500 miles away from jazz, slang and sports clothes and musical comedy.

Contrast to His Music.
Mr. Cohan's own music is as great a contrast to the music of the opera as the civilized world affords. Imagine a Cohanized "Carmen." The Toreador song, for instance, music by George Blaset, words by George Cohan, translated from the French.
Toreador, on guard,
Toreador, Johnny get your gun,
Toreador, Toreador,
Toreador, take it on the run;
Et songe bien, oui songe en combatant.
And remember, kid, she's got her eyes on you.
Qu'on oeil noir te regarde
Eyes that are, I'll say, true blue.
Et que l'amour t'offende
And that she'll wait for you.
Toreador at the stage door.
Or imagine with what zest Mr. Cohan could have written a lyric for the "Soldiers' Chorus" from Gounod's "Faust," of which the rendition by H. T. Chorley starts in:
"Fold the flag, my boys,
"Lay by the spear."
Mr. Cohan sat in his office calmly indifferent to urgent pleas that he give some Cohanesque ideas on the opera, or at least say what he thought about it.

"No one in the world knows less about grand opera than I do," he said.
"Well, Mr. Cohan, how do you account for the great number of new persons, that is, not old time regular musical customers, who are going in ever increasing numbers to the opera, to symphony concerts and all that sort of thing?"
"That's easy," he replied, leaning back in his chair and tipping his soft hat clear over his right eye. "People have been liking and appreciating music more. In other words—"
"In your own words, please, Mr. Cohan."
"Well, if you will have it that way it

is simply this: Music has got under Uncle Sam's vest, that's all. Perhaps music and the emotions become better acquainted during the war; everybody heard so much music at a time when it meant a great deal. The grand opera public undoubtedly is gaining. I think the real music lovers are increasing in numbers and prosperity. The old theory that a musician or a poet or an artist cannot succeed in business and money making is bunk.

Operas He Likes.

"If you really want to know what operas I like of course I will tell you, but I really know very little about what you might call big music. I like Puccini and Verdi. I like 'Carmen' and 'Faust,' the lighter, more tuneful operas. I really don't care a great deal for anything that hasn't a little tinkle in its music. The opera house is a contrast in some ways to the theatre. It is when I am tired after working all day on some new play in the theatre that I like best to go to the opera with some friend and just sit there with the real music fans upstairs and let the music soak in. That's my night at the opera. I have only dressed and sat in the orchestra two or three times in my life.

"The first time I ever set foot inside an opera house was about twelve years ago, perhaps more, when a friend of mine dashed a pair of box seats on me and said, 'Let's go to the opera.' That was at the Manhattan, when Oscar Hammerstein was the impresario. My friend said the prima donna sent him the seats. I might have joshed him a little bit, because he wanted to prove it. He took me to her dressing room door and said, 'Watch me; I am almost like her brother, I know her so well.'

"About five seconds later he came out as though he were shot from a cannon. Then I decided there was more action to grand opera than I had supposed and began to be interested. Later I went to hear 'The Girl of the Golden West.' I liked it very much and went again. I hear that Puccini is to make an opera from 'The Son-Daughter.' That should go very well. I said myself when I saw 'The Son-Daughter' that it would make a good opera. So you see I must have learned something about grand opera at that. I like 'Beaucaire' very much as a high class light opera for a theatre."

One had a suspicion that Mr. Cohan was a trifle overmodest about his musical knowledge. As an American composer for musical comedy he has an unusual record, and he wrote the chief American song of the war, "Over There."

"Mr. Cohan often goes to the opera with Stephen Reardon, who was a lifelong friend of the playwright's father, the late Jere J. Cohan. Mr. Reardon in his younger days was a policeman. For thirty years he has heard grand opera at least once a week through the season, being an inveterate 'opera fan.'"

"The Passion Flower" to Move.

"The Passion Flower," with Miss Nance O'Neill in the chief role, will move to the Belmont Theatre for an indefinite engagement commencing with the performance to-morrow afternoon, after having played for several weeks at the Greenwich Village Theatre.

At Neighborhood Playhouse.

At the Neighborhood Playhouse in Grand street to-night "The Glittering Gate," by Lord Dunsany and Andrewey's "The Beautiful Sabina Woman" will be repeated. This will be the second performance of this new bill. It is the first presentation here of the Russian playwright's drama.